


JULY 2000

 DISTRICT 7 EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

Inside Seven

GRAY DAVIS, GOVERNOR

MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET, SECRETARY OF BUSINESS TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY

JEFF MORALES, DIRECTOR

DISTRICT 7 DELIVERS!

During the fourth quarter of the 1999 fiscal year, and with the June 30 fiscal year-end deadline looming, District 7 delivered in excess of \$300 million in projects – an astonishing amount of project delivery in a very short period of time. According to Raja Mitwasi, Acting Division Chief, Program and Project Management, this incredible amount of project delivery is the result of a team effort by devoted District personnel committed to quality and excellence, and guidance from Robert W. Sassaman, District Director. Sassaman said, “Our team came through thanks to their dedication and hard work. They did an outstanding job.” Mitwasi added, “We succeeded because of the teamwork between the project managers, functional managers and office engineers, as well as the leadership, support and trust from our District Director.”

What project “delivery” in-fact means is that transportation projects are presented to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) by June 30 of the current fiscal year. The four major mile-



Raja Mitwasi and team members put their heads together to deliver the District's projects and programs. Left to right: Kelly Lamare, Office Chief, Office of Project Management, South; Alberto Angelini, Office Chief, Office of Program Management; Marco Ruano, Office Chief, Office of Project Management, Route 210; Roger Yoh, Senior Transportation Engineer, Supervisor, Office of Capital Outlay Support Data Management; Raja Mitwasi, Acting Division Chief, Division of Program and Project Management; Rose Casey, Office Chief, Office of Project Management, Central/TMC; Satish Chander, Office Chief, Office of Local Programs and Alameda Corridor; and Tad Tefari, Office Chief, Office of Project Management, North.

stones in project delivery are: (1) Project Approval and Environmental Document (PAED); (2) Ready to List (RTL); (3) Right of Way certification; (4) construction completion. When a project is presented to the CTC it means Caltrans has delivered the first three milestones, the project has funding and will be voted on, on time, and that the project is ready to go to Construction. Mitwasi said, “It is critical for a project to meet the first three milestones and present it to the CTC within the fiscal year it has been committed to.” And Jack Boda, Headquarters Program Manager, said, “We want to thank District 7 for coming through in the

“eleventh hour.”

With only 35% of the committed projects delivered at the end of the third quarter, it became apparent that a major undertaking was necessary in order to be successful with the remaining project delivery before the June 30 deadline. With determined support and guidance from Sassaman, Mitwasi led the effort to do whatever was necessary to meet the Department's goal, which is 90% of the projects delivered and 100% of the dollars budgeted.

After fierce determination, for the entire fiscal year District 7 subsequently delivered 38 of 41 projects equaling 93% project delivery totaling \$537 million, as well as 103% of the budgeted dollars. Some of the major projects delivered include: a \$97 million San Bernardino Freeway (I-10) High Occupancy Vehicle lane project from Route 57 to the county line; a \$30 million Pacific Coast Highway (1) Pleasant Valley Interchange project; and five major projects totaling \$200 million on Route 30 (210 Corridor). The Route 30 projects alone represent 40% of the District's programmed projects. Mitwasi said he is

continued on page 3



THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

As we prepare to close out another fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), we look closely at project delivery statistics, that is, how well we deliver projects and programs and the resources used, compared to those that were budgeted when the fiscal year began.

As we entered the 4th quarter, District 7 found themselves behind at only 30% of the projected delivery. It was then that the mighty Caltrans team approach went into action. Led by Raja Mitwasi, Acting Chief, Program and Project Management, District 7's division chiefs, office chiefs, project managers, functional managers and office engineers, left no stone unturned in their monumental efforts and delivered over \$300 million dollars worth of projects to the California Transportation Commission, bringing the total to 90% project delivery, as well as 103% of the dollars budgeted before the fiscal year-end. I commend the district wholeheartedly for an excellent job in the delivery of projects.

Program and Project Management has overall responsibility for project delivery in District 7. They are the single focal point for delivery of all projects and the unit that has the project managers. I look to the project manager as the captain of the team, but it is the functional managers, particularly Design, who handle the delivery of the pieces that together become the project. The success of the team's delivery includes everyone – because everyone in District 7 plays an integral part in project and program delivery.

Caltrans is also responsible for other types of "deliverables." Some other deliverables include the Maintenance Program, which has delivered more than other districts in the state in the CAP M Program – about \$67 million. Our Operations program has many deliverables in the form of reports and how well our freeway/highway system is operating; how well our tow-truck (Freeway Service Patrol) operation is functioning; how well the Transportation Management Center is operating; and how well we are getting the messages out to our customers. Planning looks ahead to see what we can do to help mitigate projects in the future. Resource Management is responsible for making sure our facility runs smoothly while plans for a new building materialize. Construction is responsible for making sure our projects are being built, administering contracts, working on Contract Change Orders, analyzing claims and making sure we are getting the most for our money in delivery of the projects. External Affairs informs the public

regarding closures, special events and projects; works with elected officials, particularly responding to the vast amount of correspondence in a timely manner; and provides maps, fact sheets and other important visual services. Right of Way, although now officially part of the Southern Region Service Center, is a strong player in the delivery of the District's projects; we will always think of them as part of District 7. These are examples are all types of deliverables. I am very proud of District's 7's team delivery.

Caltrans is always looking ahead to the future and at what needs to be built in our next 20-year period to help facilitate traffic flow and lessen congestion in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. On a route-by-route basis, our Planning staff is continually developing different scenarios needed for delivery of future projects.

This is also the time of year for taking vacations. It's a good time to get away and be with our families and friends; to go somewhere new or try things we have never tried before; or to go back to an old familiar campsite, hiking trail or fishing spot to relax. The jobs here keep us busy enough, but take the time to relax, get reacquainted with your families and leave the worries of the days behind you. Come back refreshed and ready to start again. I anticipate that fiscal year 2000/2001 will be just as demanding on each of us as was this past fiscal year.

And while you're traveling, whether in California or elsewhere, take a look at what is around you on the road systems, especially in other states or countries. I think you will appreciate the job that you are doing here at Caltrans: the greatest freeway system in the world, particularly here in District 7, known around the world as the "capitol of the freeway system." And that is because of all of you, the Caltrans District 7 Team!

Have a wonderful Fourth of July holiday, a great vacation, come back renewed and be safe while you're out there! •

ROBERT W. SASSAMAN
District Director

D-7 Delivers!

continued from page 1

happy to share these significant project delivery accomplishments with all District 7 staff.

Mitwasi also mentioned that in addition to support from Sassaman, he wishes to give credit and appreciation to all staff who participated in the delivery of projects to the CTC this fiscal year, especially during the fourth quarter. He said, "Special thanks to division chiefs, office chiefs, capital outlay support, project managers, functional managers and office engineers in District 7. They all put their heads together, working very closely with their staff members to ensure success. Their teamwork and spirit made it happen!" •



The Pleasant Valley Interchange project team celebrates with sparkling apple cider and a cake which reads "Pleasant Valley Team - Thanks for a job well done!"



"Heart Walk" a Huge Success!

Congratulations to the enthusiastic group of orange-clad Caltrans employees, family and friends who raised \$3,319 in the fight against heart disease and who posed for a group photo at the Good Samaritan Hospital Downtown American Heart Walk in June. Thanks to: Nate Cradle, Clem Collins, Darla Duncan, Ki Nikki Gordon, Caroline Pierson, Junious Pierson, Paul Chavez, Margarita Kautz, Brenda Anderson, Zsazquez English, Vincent Butler, Tony Avent, Ron Woods, Louie Morales, Maxine Epperson, Denny Greenwood, Mel Holguin, Doris Goff, Rick Harrison, Erica Fontenot, Alex Guzman, Ati Fuiave, Don Snowden, Rosie White, Roger McLean, Randy Carter, Elijah Taylor, Derrick Simington, Dave Duncan, Woody Julian, Frank Escobar, Scott Okamura, Trish Sanders, Stacy Cowan, Andrew Gray, Emma Griffith, Bobby Welch, Cheyo Garcia, Tony Garcia, Shawn Silva, Lasheia Goff, Vernell Metoyer, Sabrina Walker, Elsa Gomez, Willie Mae McKay, Jesus Ramirez, Sean Billante and Marlene Silva. Way to go Heart Walk Team!

Well-Deserved Awards

Caltrans is proud to announce the following awards:

Excellence in Transportation Award for Major Structures, State, Urban:

The I-110 Harbor Freeway HOV Viaduct

Awarded to Caltrans District 7 and the Engineering Service Center

Excellence in Transportation Award for Historic Preservation/Cultural Enhancement, State:

The Olympic Boulevard Bridge

Awarded to Caltrans District 7, the City of Los Angeles and California Archives

Excellence in Transportation Award:

Adams-Figueroa Historic Lighting District

Award to Caltrans' Office of Environmental Planning

Year 2000 Tranny Awards for Special Programs

The San Bernardino Freeway (I-10) 55-Hour Construction Closure

Awarded to Caltrans District 7

Bits & Pieces.....



After 38 years of Caltrans service, John Hogan celebrates with family and friends at a huge barbecue held in his honor.



Left to right: Raja Mitwasi, Chief, Program and Project Management; Mike Perovich, Chief, Office of Design, Branch C; Robert W. Sassaman, District Director; and Dave Simms, Deputy Chief Counsel study the Division of Highways sign chart, almost a half-century old.

Caltrans congratulates John Hogan, Maintenance Area Superintendent, Special Crews, who retired recently after 38 years of dedicated state service. An amazing barbecue and pot-luck lunch was held in his honor, where his family was in attendance and a large gathering of Caltrans friends and co-workers wished him well. Congratulations and good luck, John Hogan. You will be missed!

If you have an idea that would save the state money, contact the Merit Award Program for information. Jerry Tripp, an employee from District 6, submitted an employee suggestion regarding replacing incandescent lamps that has since been adopted statewide. Because his suggestion would save the department a considerable amount of money and met other criteria, he is eligible for a \$50,000 award, the maximum compensation allowed under California law. According to District 6's Grapevine newsletter, "Jerry intends to share his award among the employees who worked closely with him on this project and who were instrumental in its ultimate success." If you have an idea, or would just like more information on the Merit Award Program, all the information you need can be found at:

<http://www.dpa.ca.gov/benefits/merit/MeritProgramregulations.htm>.

On behalf of the Caltrans Los Angeles Legal Division, Dave Simms, Deputy Chief Counsel, donated a Division of Highways Sign Chart dated July, 1953, to Mike Perovich for the future District Museum. It had been hanging in the office of Joe Montoya for a number of years, then it was passed down to Ray Danielson. The interesting chart shows some of the older freeway and highway guide signs and warning signs. Thank you Dave Simms and the Legal Division for your valuable donation and for keeping the Caltrans history alive! Anyone interested in making a donation to the District Museum should contact Mike Perovich at extension 7-0384.



Irene Coyazo, Chief, Legislative Affairs, center, welcomes new additions to her staff -- left, Dorothy Osakwe and right, Carmen Roberts.



The Equal Employment Opportunity office is pleased to announce the addition of Dorothy Osakwe and Carmen Roberts to its staff. Dorothy and Carmen are the new District 7 Equal Opportunity Officers, and both will conduct Equal Opportunity classes and address other issues as they pertain to Equal Opportunity. Cathi McMahan, former Equal Opportunity Officer, has recently taken over a new assignment in the Governmental Affairs Unit.

Dorothy comes to Caltrans from the Department of Insurance where she was employed as an insurance investigator. Prior to obtaining employment with the Department of Insurance, Dorothy was employed in the insurance industry for 10 years as a claims administrator. She brings with her a wealth of knowledge regarding conflict resolution and investigation techniques. Dorothy said, "I am looking forward to continued promotion of the Equal Opportunity Program and fostering an environment of open communication and understanding."

Carmen was previously employed at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, where she investigated housing discrimination complaints. Carmen brings an abundance of knowledge and experience to the position regarding equal opportunity laws and regulations. Carmen said, "I am looking forward to upholding the goals and mission of the Equal Opportunity Office."

The Equal Opportunity Office is located on the Fifth Floor in room 500-B. For questions or additional information, please feel free to stop by and visit Dorothy or Carmen. They can also be contacted at extensions 7-8494 and 7-8244, respectively. Welcome to Dorothy and Carmen, and good luck to Cathi McMahan on her new assignment! •

Sebastian "Seb" Ruiz Retires

After serving Caltrans faithfully for over 43 years, Sebastian "Seb" Ruiz has decided to move to "leisure world," as he calls it, and retire effective July 1. Seb began his career as a Skilled Laborer. The ensuing years found him working as a Building Maintenance Worker, a Toll Collector on the Vincent Thomas Bridge, then back to the District Office Building (DOB) where, for the past twelve years he has held the position of Utility Shop Supervisor. Among many other things, Seb supervised Building Maintenance Workers, Electricians, Carpenters, Painters and other facility personnel. With Seb in charge, he and his crews have kept the DOB in ship-shape order for many years. Leonard Thompson, Chief, Business Management, said, "Sebastastian Ruiz has been a very cooperative team player during my three years as Chief. He and his crew performed work rearranging workstations and offices for many employees. The work was always performed with a high degree of accomplishment. "Sebby" as many people knew him, was well appreciated by District employees. If it could be done, Sebby would get it done."

Seb said it feels "unbelievable" to finally retire. He said, "It has been a long haul and it's been fun. I feel good that I could help a lot of people over the years at Caltrans and I only wish I could have done more. I want to thank everyone for being so nice to work with, and for their friendship and help over the years. I will miss everyone."

Seb's helpful demeanor and cheerful attitude will be missed by all. His short-term future plans include catching up on working around the house, and he eventually hopes to move to southern Arizona. His hobbies including hiking and camping. Caltrans extends its appreciation to Seb for 43 years of dedicated service, and sends the very best to him for a happy retirement! •



Seb Ruiz (left) "hammers home" his message to supervisor Sylvester Wilson, center; and Leonard Thompson right, reminding them that yes, he is indeed retiring after 43 years.

Dear Caltrans:

I just wanted to thank the people who did the tunnel painting project on Sepulveda Boulevard just south of Los Angeles International Airport. I go through that tunnel twice a day on my commute. The white paint made the traffic lanes inside the tunnel much easier to see, making it safer and making me less nervous when I go through there. Also, all the work was done very quickly and without disturbing my commute (it was kind of like magic – it just sort of appeared over a week's span). So this is just a "thank you" from a commuter for the great work improving my drive to and from work.

Brenda Antrim
Redondo Beach and Santa Monica

Mr. Robert Sassaman

Dear Mr. Sassaman:

I would like to take this opportunity to formally recognize and express my gratitude to some outstanding employees and offices within your district. Recently, a motorcyclist sustained severe injuries when she lost control of her motorcycle...on the westbound Valley Boulevard on-ramp to the northbound I-605 Freeway. She filed a lawsuit against the State of California alleging that the roadway was in a dangerous condition and caused her accident....

These employees and offices were courteous, intelligent, hard-working and always demonstrated their dedication to seek excellence in the performance of their jobs. Their names include Mario Rodriguez, Maintenance Supervisor, East Region; Jim Rongey, Maintenance Leadworker, East Region; Garrett Eberly, Bridge Maintenance Supervisor; and Steve Devorkin, Audio/Visual Specialist. The offices I would like to recognize include: Claims – Legal Support; Photogrammetry; Electrical Maintenance; Office of Structures Maintenance and Investigations; and Graphic Services. Through the efforts of these dedicated employees, we were able to save the State from a potentially large jury verdict and to convince a judge and jury (12-0 defense verdict in favor of the State) that the subject roadway was reasonably



maintained by our maintenance forces on the date of the incident, and that the incident was most likely caused by the result of the negligent conduct of the motorcyclist. Whether it was a request to review voluminous maintenance records; expedite the preparation and production of trial exhibits and records from the district; meet and conduct accident reconstructions at the incident site, sometimes late into the night; meet at their Maintenance yards, offices or the Legal office to engage in trial preparation; or testify at trial; all of our employees promptly and professionally executed their duties.

In closing it made me proud to be able to argue to the jury during my closing argument that the men and women employees of Caltrans are dedicated and hard-working individuals who take our mission seriously; that is, to provide the safest, cleanest and most efficient transportation system in the world. This victory for the State would not have been possible without the cooperation and teamwork of all the different individuals and offices in District 7 who contributed to our success.

Michael A. Cacciotti,
Deputy State Attorney, Los Angeles Legal Division

Irma Lopez,
Media Relations/Public Affairs

Dear Ms. Lopez:

On behalf of the staff at the Union Rescue Mission, we would like to thank you for your generous donation of toys and gifts for our Christmas season, including our Christmas Store. In 1999, your participation made it possible to give to more than 5,000 children in the Los Angeles community. Our Christmas Store was a unique way to help build our families and make Christmas special for their children. Thanks for caring God Bless You All!

Union Rescue Mission continues to

reach out to the poor and needy for over a century. Without help from friends like you, we would not be able to successfully reach to so many all year 'round. We thank you so much for your kindness and continued generosity. Please extend our appreciation to your organization and all your staff members for continued support. Together, we can make a difference. In 1999, Caltrans made a difference!

Joyfully Serving,
Maria Jeanette Berkey,
Gifts In Kind Manager Union Rescue Mission

Mr. Doug Failing, District Division Chief

Dear Mr. Failing:

Both VCE Services, the City's consultant on the subject job (Borchard/101 Freeway Phase II, Thousand Oaks), and I as a City representative, wish to recognize what we consider to be an exceptional effort on the part of two Caltrans employees on this job... We feel that Mr. Fekade Mesfin and Mr. Khiem Nguyen went well above their job requirements to resolve a multitude of issues... Mr. Mesfin was always helpful and ready to do whatever was necessary to get issues resolved when a higher level position was required to accommodate such tasks. He also kept abreast of the project and was well informed of any potential stumbling blocks in the process and what would be required to resolve or avoid them. He took a proactive, rather than an inactive role. Without this attitude, the project might have become forever entangled in the "process."

Mr. Nguyen always responded rapidly and competently to our concerns and questions. He always kept us updated on the progress of the project through the Caltrans system. Whenever there appeared to be a potential problem, he arranged the meetings to get us directly to the section or person that could solve the problem. We feel that special recognition of the efforts of these employees on this project should be noted and they reflect well on your entire staff.

Sincerely,
Medhat F. Maximous,
Senior Civil Engineer/Project Manager
City of Thousand Oaks

The following was printed in the *Los Angeles Times* March 7.

The Burbank - Glendale-Pasadena Airport wishes to express its deep gratitude to its management operations and public safety personnel; to the Burbank Police and Fire Department; California Highway Patrol; American Red Cross; Caltrans; and so many more who responded promptly and professionally to the Southwest Airlines landing incident last Sunday evening. The Authority also salutes the professionalism of the Southwest crew who so effectively evacuated the aircraft when it came to a halt on Hollywood Way, and other personnel from other airlines who volunteered their time during the incident. We share the relief of everyone involved that this event involved no loss of life. We trust that the review by the National Transportation Safety Board will yield useful findings that will further aviation safety. The safety and convenience of the traveling public is our Number 1 priority.

Carl Meseck, President
Dios Marrero, Executive Director
Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport

Irma Lopez, Media Relations/Public Affairs

Dear Ms. Lopez:

It was very nice meeting you today. I want to thank everyone for making our visit to Caltrans so interesting and informative. We appreciated the time and effort that went into this program. We were all impressed very much. Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Sonny Harris, UCLA Faculty Women's Club

Caltrans

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your prompt announcement regarding the Amador Street construction/closure. And thank you for the clarification about Stadium Way and for keeping the community up to date. This has made a lot of difference in terms of our neighborhood being informed and aware of construction and potential detours.

Sincerely,
Sandy Gale and Alicia Brown



QUALITY IN CALTRANS

Q is for being the QUALITY leader in transportation.
U is for UNRELENTING excellence and dedication.
A is for ACCOUNTABILITY in everything we do.
L is for a LEGACY of Quality; and Quality is *you!*
I is for INTEGRITY: respect and be respected.
T is for continuous TRAINING, never neglected.
Y is for YOU, the Quality Caltrans employee –
continuing leaders and role models in transportation for the 21st Century.

One of the important goals of the Caltrans Quality Program is to "Be a leader and role model for Quality internally and externally." This is a personal mission for each and every employee to undertake. It takes a continuous commitment to excellence, 365 days per year. The Quality Program's web site contains a wealth of valuable resources right at your fingertips to help each and every employee to become the best they can be to continue the tradition as leaders and role models for Quality. The site contains Quality Program information on the following:

- Quality Program Overview Presentation (Web version and PowerPoint version)
- Mission, Goals and Vision
- Quality in Caltrans Philosophy
- Customers
- Quality Staff Information
- Resources, including the following;
 - On-line resources
 - Council for Continuous Improvement (CCI) materials library
 - Quality Video Library
 - Quality Library (books)
 - Quality reference materials guide
 - Quotes – some thoughts on work, quality, attitude, change...
- Quality Award Winners
- And much, much more.

A few moments is all it takes to log on to a world of Quality information to become the very best you can be. Log on to <http://onramp.dot.ca.gov/quality/>. Continue the Caltrans District 7 tradition as leaders and role models for Quality in Caltrans! •

What's Cookin' At Caltrans

A FEAST FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY!

"RED, WHITE AND BLUE" MOLD

From "Celebrating 100 Years of Jello" Holiday Specialties

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2-1/2 cups boiling water | 1-1/2 cups sliced strawberries |
| 1 small package JELL-O strawberry gelatin | 1 cup cold water |
| 1 small package JELL-O Berry Blue gelatin | 1 pint (2 cups) vanilla ice cream, softened |
| 1 small package JELL-O lemon gelatin | 1-1/2 cups blueberries |

Stir 1 cup boiling water into each of the red and blue gelatins in separate bowls at least 2 minutes until completely dissolved. Stir 1/2 cup of the cold water into each bowl. Place bowl of red gelatin in larger bowl of ice and water. Stir until thickened, about 8 minutes. Stir in strawberries. Pour into 9X5-inch loaf pan. Refrigerate 7 minutes. Stir remaining 1/2 cup boiling water into lemon gelatin in bowl at least 2 minutes until completely dissolved. Spoon in ice cream until melted/smooth. Spoon over red gelatin. Refrigerate 7 minutes. Place bowl of blue gelatin in larger bowl of ice and water. Stir until thick, about 7 minutes. Stir in blueberries. Spoon over lemon gelatin. Refrigerate 4 hours. Unmold. Serves 8-10.

BOSTON BAKED BEANS

From the *Norman Rockwell Illustrated Cookbook*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 pound dry navy beans | 1 large onion, diced |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | 1 cup molasses |
| 1 teaspoon dry English mustard | 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed | 1/2 pound salt pork, sliced |

Rinse and pick through beans; place in large kettle. Cover with water and soak 4 hours. Drain; place in large kettle. Cover with water and bring to boil. Cook covered about 45 minutes, until just tender. Drain; reserve liquid. Combine onion, salt, molasses, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and brown sugar. Place 1/3 of beans in bean pot with small amount of reserved liquid. Cover with about 1/3 molasses mixture. Place several slices pork on top. Repeat layers; add part of reserved liquid with each layer. Bake in preheated 300-degree oven 5 to 6 hours until tender; add water as needed to keep beans covered. Serves 8-10.



Inside Seven

IS PUBLISHED BY THE
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7 • EXTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT
120 SOUTH SPRING STREET • ROOM 100
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 897-4867 • FAX (213) 897-3836
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/>

EDITOR JEANNE BONFILIO
MEDIA RELATIONS CHIEF MARGIE TIRITILLI
STAFF WRITERS PAT REID
..... IVY ESTRADA
GRAPHIC SERVICES MONICA MURILLO
PHOTOGRAPHY STEVE DeVORKIN
PRINTING INTAGLIO
DISTRIBUTION IRMA LOPEZ



GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET
Secretary - Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

JEFF MORALES
Director - California Department of Transportation



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER